

**WASHINGTON. D.C.** – House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Ranking Member Darrell Issa (R-CA) and House Select Committee on Global Warming Ranking Member James Sensenbrenner (R-WI), in a letter to Chairmen Towns and Markey, demanded a joint investigation of a reportedly deliberate effort to circumvent transparency requirements in the formulation of carbon emissions regulations.

“Negotiating back room deals with select special interests, insisting that nothing is ever written and refusing to respond to legitimate Congressional oversight inquiries stand in direct contradiction to President Obama’s pledge of openness and transparency,” said Issa. “Negotiating new policy through winks and nods to prevent paper trails is a rotten practice regardless of where one stands on these costly regulations.”

“I find it ironic that while the President is espousing the virtues of unprecedented levels of openness and transparency in his government, members of his Administration have embraced an inside-the-beltway mentality which does very little to build public trust,” Sensenbrenner said. “The American public deserves to know its government is writing the regulations and laws that will have severe and lasting impacts on the economy and their lives. Congress should investigate these back-room deals with the same intensity it devoted to investigating past Presidential Administrations.”

Mary Nichols, the head of the California Air Resources Board (CARB), revealed to the *New York Times*

that the White House held a series of secret meetings with select special interests as they were crafting the new CAFE standards. Nichols admitted there was a deliberate “vow of silence” surrounding the negotiations between the White House and California on vehicle fuel economy standards.

According to Nichols’ interview, Carol Browner Assistant to the President for Energy and Climate Change quietly orchestrated private discussions from the White House with auto industry officials. Great care was taken to “put nothing in writing, ever.” This coordinated effort, led by Carol Browner, to leave no paper trail of the deliberations within the White House appears to be a deliberate and willful violation of the Presidential Records Act.

The Presidential Records Act requires the Administration to take, “all such steps as may be necessary to assure that the activities, deliberations, decisions, and policies that reflect the performance of his constitutional, statutory, or other official or ceremonial duties are adequately documented and that such records are maintained as Presidential records.”

[Click here to read the full text of the letter to Chairman Edolphus Towns and Edward Markey requesting a joint investigation.](#)